

proved that *The Loves of the Plants* was not utterly inimitable, for he successfully palmed off fragments of his poem on his opponents as unpublished work by Dr. Darwin. The English, on the other hand, are still in India. At all events, Dr. Beddoes was not inspired to pursue poetry much further. To us, indeed, when he mounts Pegasus, he has rather the air of the White Knight, so covered is he with danglements and excrescences, with appendices on Explosive Compositions and discussions whether black men are black owing to 'lack of oxygene in the *rete muscosum*, and why it is that they smell. But a few other fragments of verse survive, including a not unamusing parody (1795) of the new style in poetry as seen by a staunch Darwinian. It is a description of a cottage and, though older than *Lyrical Ballads*, satirises a type of verse that Wordsworth was soon to make famous:

Here, when silently

Coating the green and lozenged panes, thick
snow
Bedims the scanty daylight, nestles the snug
Family, delighted up the chimney's shaft,
Illumining the chasm, to trace the spark's
Ascent; or touch with timid finger-rip
The faggot's hissing ooze, and sniff the fumes.
I knew an Irishman; to England he
Came every spring a hay-making; and much
Would praise his cabin. By a bog it stood,
And he had store of peats. Without a chimney
Stood the litde cabin. Full of warmth and
smoke,
It cherished its owner. The smoke he loved,
Loved for the warmth's sake, though it bleared
his eyes.
Now when the North-East pinches, I bethink
me
Of this poor Irishman; and think 'how sweet
'It were to house with him and pat his cur,

'And peel potatoes mid his cabin's smoke/
A litde earlier, in 1793, he had assailed
belles lettres in
yet another direction, that of fiction. And
there the Muses